

nated abruptly. There appeared to take place in the nervous expansions of the organs of sense, a process resembling that of *attention*, as exhibited in the operations of the brain; and this was frequently the cause why our perceptions were at one time so much keener than at others.

Dr. Patterson exhibited to the Society a second diamond from Hall County, Georgia, nearly three carats in weight, and considered to be of the first water. Mr. Peale stated that he had a specimen of granular quartz, supposed to be the gang of the diamond, that was decidedly flexible.

Stated Meeting, March 6.

Present, sixteen members.

Dr. PATTERSON, Vice-President, in the Chair.

A letter was read from the New York Historical Society, dated New York, February 26, 1846, in relation to the printing, by Congress, of only one hundred copies of the Memoirs on Subjects of Science, prepared by gentlemen of the United States Exploring Expedition, and it was referred to the Committee appointed on the same subject at the last meeting.

The following donations were announced:—

FOR THE LIBRARY.

Journal of the Franklin Institute of the State of Pennsylvania. Third Series. Vol. XI. Feb. 1846. No. 2. 8vo.—*From Dr. Patterson.*

The Medical News and Library. Vol. IV. March, 1846. No. 39. 8vo.—*From Messrs. Lea & Blanchard.*

Annual Report of the Directors and Physicians of the Kentucky Lunatic Asylum to the Legislature. December Session, 1845. Frankfort, Ky. 1846. 8vo.—*From the Kentucky Historical Society.*

Report from the Secretary of the Treasury, communicating a Report of the Superintendent of the Coast Survey, showing the progress

of the Work under his charge, during the year ending November, 1845. 8vo.—*From Prof. A. D. Bache.*

Eighth Geological Report to the Twenty-sixth General Assembly of the State of Tennessee, made November 1st, 1845. By G. Troost, M.D.—*From the Author.*

The Oregon Question. By Albert Gallatin. New York, 1846. 8vo.—*From the New York Historical Society.*

ADDITION TO THE LIBRARY BY PURCHASE.

Astronomische Nachrichten. No. 551. 4to.

The Committee, consisting of Mr. A. D. Bache, Dr. R. M. Patterson, and Mr. T. M'Ewen, on the paper of Mr. Nulty, entitled, "On the Determination of Azimuths by the Star Polaris," reported in favour of publication, which was accordingly ordered.

Dr. Bache informed the Society of the death, on the 4th of March, of Mr. Joseph Reed, aged 73.

Mr. Peale offered, for the examination of members, a specimen of the flexible granular quartz referred to at the last meeting.

Prof. Kendall read a letter from Prof. Stephen Alexander, suggesting for consideration the following hypothesis, to account for the peculiarities in the appearance of Von Biela's comet. It supposes a partial change to have taken place similar to that which, according to Sir John Herschell, would seem to have been experienced by Halley's comet about the time of its perihelion passage in 1835.

The central portion of Von Biela's comet has been transformed into invisible vapour, and the portion designated by Lieut. Maury as "Biela," seems to be more sensitive to such a change than "No. 2." The progress of this change would seem to account for—

1st. The apparent rupture of the comet.

2d. The seeming recess of the two portions, as observed by Mr. Walker.

3d. The comparative decay of "Biela" observed by Lieut. Maury.

4th. The comparative increase of the same since the perihelion passage, observed by the same astronomer.

5th. The light arch of cometary matter mentioned in Lieut. Maury's account of his observation, Feb. 19th.

6th. If the hypothesis is true, the two portions will probably soon appear to be reunited.

Prof. Kendall also stated some of the results of his own observations, which agree with those above referred to. He had observed the comet "Biela" on the previous evening, but could find no trace of "No. 2," though perhaps it might have been seen under more favourable atmospheric circumstances.

Prof. Kendall referred to a new comet, discovered at Cambridge, Mass., and which had also been seen at Washington.

Stated Meeting, March 20.

Present, twenty-eight members.

Dr. CHAPMAN, President, in the Chair.

A letter was received and read:—

From Mr. John Cook, informing the Society of a donation to its Library, from Prof. Schröder of Upsala, Sweden,

The following donations were announced:—

FOR THE LIBRARY.

Mémoires de l'Académie Impériale des Sciences de Saint-Pétersbourg. VI^{me}. Série. Sciences Mathématiques, Physiques et Naturelles. Tome Sixième. Seconde Partie: Sciences Naturelles. Tome quatrième, 6^{me}. livraison. Saint-Pétersbourg, 1845. 4to.—*From the Imperial Academy of St. Pétersbourg.*

Mémoires de l'Académie Impériale des Sciences de Saint-Pétersbourg. VI^{me}. Série. Sciences Politiques, Histoire, Philologie. Tome cinquième. 5^{me}. et 6^{me}. livraison. Saint-Pétersbourg, 1845. 4to.—*From the same.*

Mémoires présentés à l'Académie Impériale des Sciences de Saint-Pétersbourg. Par divers Savans, et lus dans ses Assemblées. Tome quatrième. 6^{me}. livraison. Saint-Pétersbourg. 1845. 4to.—*From the same.*

Recueil des Actes de la Séance Publique de l'Académie Impériale des Sciences de Saint-Pétersbourg, tenue le 29 Décembre, 1844.